

## WELCOME TO EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Today is Peanut Butter Sunday:** Please drop off donations in the bins around campus. December donations are for Harvest Hope. Thank you for joining the fight against hunger in The Midlands.

**Mall to Manger Challenge Donations Due Today:** Please write "M2M" in the memo line of your check and place it in the offering plate. All proceeds help provide Bibles for children in our community through the Salvation Army.

**Christmas Eve Worship in the Sanctuary:** Join us at 5 pm for the Children's Service (Nursery for infants-2K), 7 pm for the Family Candlelight Service (Nursery for infants-5K), or at 9 pm for Candlelight Communion (No childcare).

**Donations for Christmas Lunch at Transitions:** Please drop off donations of Hawaiian Rolls, Mandarin oranges, bananas, pasta salad, Christmas cookies or bars (3 per bag please), and snack bags of gorp to the Staff Kitchen (Education Building) today by noon. You may also make a monetary donation; checks should be made out to EPC with "Transitions" in the memo line.

**Eastminster will be closed on Monday, December 25:** There are no worship services on Christmas Day.

**Pledges for 2023 Year-end:** You may place your pledge balance for 2023 in the offering plate this morning. If you are dropping your year-end balance by the Church Office, please mark "Attn: Treasurer," and deliver to the Church Office receptionist by noon this Friday, December 29. All mailed year-end donations need to be postmarked by this Saturday, December 30. Thank you for your tithes and offerings.

**2024 Pledging** - If you have already made your pledge, thank you! If you have not yet submitted your pledge, please do! Your pledge represents your commitment to give for the spread of the kingdom of God through Eastminster.

**Join us on Sunday, December 31, for Worship and Intergenerational Brunch:** We will enjoy blended worship in the Sanctuary at 9 am and 11:15 am. Plan to join us for brunch in Thompson Hall (10 am) between services. There is no Sunday School on December 31 (Regular childcare for infants - 2K and Children's Church for 3K-5K).

**Eastminster will be closed on Monday, January 1.** Have a safe and happy New Year.

**Donate Adult Socks and Underwear this Winter:** Make a difference in the lives of those in our community who may be transitioning or without shelter and in need. Contact Kelly McGrady (ext. 123) with questions.

**Cradle Roll Sunday is January 7, at 9 am, in the Sanctuary:** Celebrate new life in the Eastminster family. Our parents and newborns will process into worship and be recognized and welcomed.

**Officer Installation is January 7, at 11:15 am, in the Sanctuary:** This is a time we'll welcome new officers (Class of 2026). Also, be sure to thank the Elders and Deacons from the Class of 2023, who have served faithfully over the last three years.

**Mark Your Calendars for Adult Evening Class Kick-offs:** Sundays@5 classes begin on January 7, and WE@EPC classes and meals start January 10, 2024. For more details and to sign up for a variety of classes, visit our website at: [eastminsterpres.org/ministries/adults/#adult-classes](http://eastminsterpres.org/ministries/adults/#adult-classes).

**Flowers in the sanctuary** are given in celebration of the baptism of Josephine Kelly Minter by her grandparents, Kelly and Mike Avant and Randy and Lucy Minter.

### Pledge Status Report as of December 17, 2023

*Thank you to those who have pledged. If you have not yet done so, please give us an estimate of your giving to support Christ's work through Eastminster in 2024.*

220 Pledges Increased  
99 Pledges With No Change  
28 Pledges Decreased  
64 New Pledges

For a total of 411 pledges totaling \$3,675,353  
72 pledges were made for 2023, but not yet for 2024

**Unison Reading: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26**

**I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.**

**<sup>2</sup>I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

**<sup>3</sup>You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David:**

**<sup>4</sup>I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations." ...**

**<sup>19</sup>Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said: "I have set the crown on one who is mighty, I have exalted one chosen from the people.**

**<sup>20</sup>I have found my servant David; with my holy oil I have anointed him;**

**<sup>21</sup>my hand shall always remain with him; my arm also shall strengthen him.**

**<sup>22</sup>The enemy shall not outwit him, the wicked shall not humble him.**

**<sup>23</sup>I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.**

**<sup>24</sup>My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him; and in my name his horn shall be exalted.**

**<sup>25</sup>I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.**

**<sup>26</sup>He shall cry to me, "You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation!"**

### SERMON NOTES

**DEACONS:** DOLORES LONG AND LEIGH POUND  
HEAD USHER: BERRY MATTOX (9 AM) WILSON MCDONALD (11:15 AM)  
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### MINISTERS—ALL OF US!

#### STAFF

Dr. Bradley D. Smith, Pastor

Dr. Douglass D. Key, Senior Associate Pastor	Rev. Nicholas P. Demuyneck, Associate Pastor
Rev. Emily M. Mooneyhan, Associate Pastor	Rev. W. Croskeys Royall, Associate Pastor
Rev. Dr. J. Ben Sloan, Parish Associate	Fredna Lee, Director of Music Ministry
Rev. Dr. Carol J. Byrd, Parish Associate	Lucinda Shields, Interim Organist
Bill Collins, Business Manager	Emily Higgins, Director of Middle School Youth
Anna Mills Cox, Sr. Communications Officer	Katie Herndon, Day School Director
Blythe Lewis, Director of Communications	Christy Rippy, Treasurer
Emmet Hough, Director of Christian Life Center	Caroline Bennett, Small Groups Dir./Librarian
James Cassidy, A/V Director	

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023

10 AM



3200 TRENHOLM ROAD  
COLUMBIA, SC 29204

803-256-1654

[www.eastminsterpres.org](http://www.eastminsterpres.org)

## Welcome to Eastminster Presbyterian Church!

In Christ's name, we welcome you to Eastminster. We hope that you will feel the love and peace of Christ as you worship with us. Please take this time to silence the world and focus your heart and mind on worshipping our Living God.

*“So welcome each other, in the same way that Christ also welcomed you, for God's glory.” Romans 15:7.*

### PRELUDE

*Praise Be to You, Jesus Christ*

Georg Böhm

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Bradley D. Smith

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Jim, Katie, Molly and Rachel Evatt

### RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: "Good news of great joy," the angel said, "for to you a savior is born."

People: "Peace on earth," the choir sang, "for God reigns in the highest."

Leader: "Follow me," the star beckoned, "For Hope has been born in Bethlehem."

People: As we light the Christ candle, are reminded of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

Leader: Emmanuel has come and is coming.

All: Come, all ye faithful, and worship God.

### †\*HYMNS OF ADORATION

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

arr. Andrews/Sooter

#113 *Angels We Have Heard on High*

GLORIA

### \*PRAYER OF ADORATION

Rev. Nicholas P. Demuyneck

### \*THE APOSTLES' CREED *(Unison)*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our LORD; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

### \*\*GLORIA PATRI *(Please send the children forward.)*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

### \*\*TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

The 3K—5K children come to the front and bring their offering.

### SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Josephine Kelly Minter

### BAPTISMAL HYMN #115

*Away In a Manger*

MUELLER

1. Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Emily Mooneyhan

Almighty God, Light of the World, in coming to us in Jesus our Christ you caused light to shine out of darkness. We confess our slowness to see the light and our reticence to walk in your ways. We have not always opened our eyes to the needs of others, and our ears are too often closed to your calls for justice and peace. We ask forgiveness in this time of silence and pray that the Spirit of Christ be born anew within us all... (silent prayer).

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel.

Congregation: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

### RESPONSE TO THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON #145

*What Child Is This?*

GREENSLEEVES

### PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Douglass D. Key

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

### SIGNING OF FRIENDSHIP REGISTER AND OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

If you or someone you know is in need of special prayer today or if you would like to speak personally with a pastor about making a first-time commitment to Christ or growing in the Christian faith and discipleship, a pastor is on hand to speak with you following the worship service today by the pulpit in the front of the Sanctuary.

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*When I Think Upon Christmas*

King/Tan/Sieff

When I think upon Christmas, Words can't express how our Father in heaven Has sent us His best. To be born in a manger, the King in the hay, and creation will worship His Name. For the joy of the world He was born. Bringing peace to us all through the gift of the Son. Now the darkest of ages are done For the Saviour of heaven has come. When I think upon Jesus, the King of all days, I can't help but respond with an offering of praise. Like the wise men and shepherds I'll follow Your light. Like the angels I'll lift Your Name high. For the joy of the world, You were born, bringing peace to us all. Through the gift of Your love now the darkest of ages are done, for the Saviour of heaven has come. Now I look back in rev'rence to that holy night, for the God of the heavens had us on His mind. Let us sing of His glory, rejoice in His Name. Oh Emmanuel with us always and forever, His kingdom will reign.

### \*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

### \*OFFICER'S PRAYER

Leigh Pound

\*THOSE WHO ARE ABLE, PLEASE STAND. \*\*CHILDREN MAY BRING THEIR OFFERING AT THIS TIME.

†THOSE WAITING IN THE NARTHEX MAY NOW BE SEATED

THE FLOOR LEVEL OF THE SANCTUARY HAS A HEARING LOOP FOR HEARING AID USERS

### SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Unison Reading: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Page 516

Scripture Focus: Luke 1:26-38

Page 53

Pastor: The Word of the LORD!

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

### SERMON

“It Had to Take a While”

Rev. Dr. Bradley D. Smith

### \*HYMN OF DEDICATION #136

*Go Tell It on the Mountain*

GO TELL IT

### \*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

### \*RESPONSE TO THE BENEDICTION #136

*Go Tell it on the Mountain*

GO TELL IT

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

### POSTLUDE

*Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates*

FREYLINGHAUSEN, arr. David Johnson

### \*A TIME FOR GREETING AND FELLOWSHIP



### WELCOME TO EASTMINSTER

We are delighted that you have chosen to celebrate this Lord's Day with us, and we hope that in a real and meaningful way you will sense God's presence, power, and purpose among us. If you would like for us to connect with you, please scan the QR code or leave your contact information in the Friendship Pad when it is passed.

### INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?

Contact the church office at 803-256-1654 to learn more and find out about our next First Step class, a class designed to help you learn about Eastminster and our ongoing ministries.

### DURING THIS MORNING'S WORSHIP:

Josephine Kelly Minter, daughter of Ran and Olivia Minter, will receive the sacrament of baptism this morning at the 10 o'clock service. Randy Minter, paternal grandfather, will offer the baptismal prayer.

### December 31, 2023

Rev. Emily Mooneyhan

Matthew 18:10-14